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STUDIES IN THE FORNALDARSÖGUR NORÐRLANDA

I. THE HRÓMUNDAR SAGA GRIPSSONAR

1. *The MSS of the Hrómundar saga Gripssonar.*—This saga, though its matter is indubitably old, is preserved only in paper MSS, none of which date back beyond the seventeenth century. As these MSS prove to be closely related one to another, the text afforded by a critical comparison of them can have presumably but little value as a substitute for the real production of the Icelandic saga-period. That this is the case has long been recognized; in fact Árni Magnússon himself expressed very clearly his conviction of the fact upon the margin of the original MS of the saga.

The relationship of these MSS unfortunately has never been cleared up, which fact has left the date of an original, X, hitherto wholly problematical. Of the two printed editions Björner in his *Nordiska Kämpadater* (Stockholm, 1737) has simply reprinted the Stockholm MS, Holm. 67 fol. chart. (=b), which MS is a copy made by Jón Eggertsson in 1687 from some Copenhagen MS.¹ Rafn has similarly but less accurately reprinted² the Copenhagen MS, AM 587b 4to chart.³ (=a), giving a few variants from Björner's edition (b') and from another MS, AM 345 4to chart. (=c). This last MS bears at its close the date 1695 and in addition a note by Jón Jónsson under date of 1703 that it was written by his father Jón Þórðarson. The truth of this statement Kålund calls however into question (cf. *Katalog*, I, 580). The only attempt to make a critical collation of the MSS is that of Kölbing, the results of which are given in his *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Geschichte der romantischen Poesie und Prosa des Mittelalters* (Breslau, 1876), 160 f., 181 f. Kölbing calls attention to several other MSS, viz. (as d), AM 193e fol. chart. (formerly in Add. 3), which was mentioned already by Rafn. This is also in the hand of Ásgeir Jónsson and is dismissed from consid-

¹ Cf. Gödel, *Fornnorsk-isl. litt. i Sverige*, I, 206 f.; *Katalog öfver kongl. Bibliotekets fornlisl. och fornnorska handskrifter*, 199.

² In his *Fornaldarsögur Norðrlanda*, II, 365–80 (Copenhagen, 1829).

³ The first four leaves of this MS are in the hand of Ásgeir Jónsson, sc. Kålund, *Katalog over den arnamagnæanske håndskriftsamling*, I, 748.

eration by Kölbing as being nearly identical with *c*. As a matter of fact it is, as might be expected, almost exactly identical with *a*. He mentions further the important MS, AM 601b 4to chart., from the latter half of the seventeenth century (= *e*) and the Sloane MS 4860 in the British Museum, which he characterizes as worthless. This leaves the MSS *a*, *b*, *c*, and *e* for comparison, and I have verified the failure of other late paper MSS in Copenhagen to contribute anything of value to the problem. Stockholm and Uppsala possess no other MSS of this saga.

Of the four MSS just mentioned, *e*, of whose early history nothing is known, may be the oldest, and it is this MS upon whose margin Árni Magnússon has registered his opinion that the saga is merely a prose paraphrase of the corresponding rímur, the *Griplur* ("úr rímunum," and again at close "*þetta er tekið úr rímunum*"). Kölbing (181 f.) regards the four MSS as independent of one another and postulates a common original *Y*. His reasons for refusing to consider *a*, *b*, or *c* as the original of this group of MSS are in the main valid enough. What he says of the form *Lara* for *Kára* in *a* rests evidently upon Rafn's error, not upon his own observations, for *a* contains not *Lara*, but *Cara* in agreement with the other MSS. That the form of capital used is the one familiar to us through the German script may serve to explain Rafn's very careless mistake. It may be added that *d* uses the same form in the headings of the chapters (*Cap.*). The point brought out by Kölbing as disproving the dependence of *a*, *b*, *c* upon *e*, viz., that *e* omits *hverju* (Fas. II, 366:10), is on the other hand wholly incorrect. The *hverju* referred to must be the one in 366:20, as there is none in any MS in 366:10, and the fact of the matter is that *a* and *c* have here *hverju* while *b* and *e* have *einu*. There is here no textual error in any case, and the meaning in both is so nearly the same that the point is of very questionable value as a basis upon which to found manuscript relationships, especially when unsupported by other facts. The reading *einu* is furthermore confirmed by a comparison with the rímur (*Griplur*, I, 45). Kölbing has then in no sense disproved that *a*, *b*, and *c* may have originated from *e*.

In the following table are given the general results of a collation of the four MSS, including from a complete list of variants all of

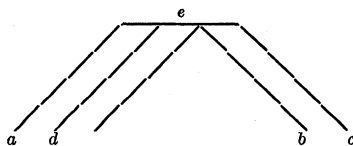
greater significance than the mere change of order of words or the suppression or addition of an unimportant particle. It may be said that the evidence of these minor variants is at no single point in contradiction to that of the more important ones. The numbers of pages and lines are from the printed text in Rafn's *Fornaldarsögur Norðrlanda* (Vol. II).

Page and Line	a	b	c	e
365:1.....	<i>Görðum í</i>	<i>Görðum</i>	<i>Görðum</i>	<i>Görðum</i>
365:16-17....	<i>Danmörk</i> <i>Ólafr konungr</i> <i>austr</i>	<i>Ólafr konungr</i> <i>vestr</i>	<i>Ólafr norðr</i>	<i>Ólafr konungr</i> <i>austr</i>
365:20.....	<i>herskip</i>	<i>herskip</i>	<i>skip</i>	<i>herskip</i>
366:4.....	<i>réði</i>	<i>réði</i>	<i>stýrði</i>	<i>réði</i>
366:8.....	<i>skal ek</i>	<i>vil ek</i>	<i>skal ek</i>	<i>skal ek</i>
366:15.....	<i>mann fyrir</i>	<i>mann fyrir</i>	<i>fyrir</i>	<i>mann fyrir</i>
366:20.....	<i>í hverju höggi</i>	<i>í einu höggi</i>	<i>í hverju höggi</i>	<i>í einu höggi</i>
367:9.....	<i>í</i>	<i>í því</i>	<i>í því</i>	<i>í því</i>
367:18.....	<i>við í stafni</i>	<i>við í stafni</i>	<i>við stafni</i>	<i>við í stafni</i>
368:2.....	.....	<i>heldr enn</i> <i>ræna kot-</i> <i>karla</i>	<i>heldr enn</i> <i>ræna kot-</i> <i>karla</i>	<i>heldr enn</i> <i>ræna kot-</i> <i>karla</i>
368:10.....	<i>hann má</i>	<i>hann má</i>	<i>hit má</i>	<i>hann má</i>
368:11.....	<i>fregn þessa</i>	<i>fregn þessa</i>	<i>frásögunna</i>	<i>fregn þessa</i>
368:14-15....	<i>fyrir framstaf-</i> <i>ni</i>	<i>fyrir framstaf-</i> <i>ni</i>	<i>fyrir stafni</i> <i>fram</i>	<i>fyrir framstaf-</i> <i>ni</i>
368:17.....	<i>VI</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>IIII</i>	<i>IV</i>
370:1.....	<i>í búki</i>	<i>af búkum</i>	<i>af búkum</i>	<i>af búkum</i>
370:11.....	<i>steinar</i>	<i>stokkar</i>	<i>stokkar</i>	<i>stokkar</i>
370:11.....	<i>datt</i>	<i>fell</i>	<i>datt</i>	<i>datt</i>
370:18.....	<i>lendar</i>	<i>herðar</i>	<i>lendar</i>	<i>lendar</i>
370:23-24....	<i>Gunnlöð</i>	<i>Gunnlöð</i>	<i>Svilöð</i>	<i>Gunnlöð</i>
370:28.....	<i>dimmt</i>	<i>myrkt</i>	<i>dimmt</i>	<i>dimmt</i>
371:3.....	<i>trúa</i>	<i>treysta</i>	<i>trúa</i>	<i>trúa</i>
371:3.....	<i>þó góðir þykki</i>	.....	<i>þó góðir þykki</i>	<i>þó góðir þykki</i>
371:8.....	<i>CXXIV</i>	<i>CXXXIV</i>	<i>CXXIV</i>	<i>CXXIV</i>
371:22.....	<i>norðr til síns</i> <i>ríkis</i>	<i>heim</i>	<i>norðr til síns</i> <i>ríkis</i>	<i>norðr til síns</i> <i>ríkis</i>
372:17.....	<i>vóra sæmd</i>	<i>yðar sæmd</i>	<i>vóra sæmd</i>	<i>vóra sæmd</i>
372:26.....	<i>Helgi</i>	<i>Helgi enn fræk-</i> <i>ni</i>	<i>Helgi</i>	<i>Helgi</i>
373:1.....	<i>orð</i>	<i>boð</i>	<i>orð</i>	<i>orð</i>
373:16.....	<i>hófst</i>	<i>tókst</i>	<i>hófst</i>	<i>hófst</i>
373:17.....	<i>Halding</i>	<i>Halding</i>	<i>Hadding</i>	<i>Halding</i>
373:27.....	<i>af liði Hald-</i> <i>ingja</i>	<i>af liði Hald-</i> <i>ingja</i>	.....	<i>af liði Hald-</i> <i>ingja</i>
374:6.....	<i>þekti</i>	<i>kendi</i>	<i>þekti</i>	<i>þekti</i>
374:16.....	<i>Hröngviði</i>	<i>Hröngviði</i> <i>bróður</i> <i>sínum</i>	<i>Hröngviði</i>	<i>Hröngviði</i>
374:27-28....	<i>ofan í</i>	<i>níðr í (jörð-</i> <i>ina)</i>	<i>ofan í völlinn</i>	<i>ofan í völlinn</i> (völlinn cancelled)

Page and Line	a	b	c	e
374:29.....	<i>tókst</i>	<i>barst</i>	<i>tókst</i>	<i>tókst</i>
375:4-5	<i>svá sverðit</i> <i>hljóp at hjöl-</i> <i>tum ofan</i>	like <i>a</i> (<i>sökk</i>)	.....	like <i>a</i> .
375:12.....	<i>hangði</i>	<i>hekk</i>	<i>hangði</i>	<i>hangði</i>
375:13.....	<i>hrifjar</i>	<i>só</i>	<i>hrifjar</i>	<i>hrifjar</i>
375:28.....	<i>svá</i>	<i>svá hart at</i>	<i>svá</i>	<i>svá</i>
376:3.....	<i>XIV</i>	<i>XIV</i>	<i>XVI</i>	<i>XIV</i>
376:27.....	<i>Hagals</i>	<i>Hagals ok</i> <i>konu hans</i>	<i>Hagals</i>	<i>Hagals</i>
377:15.....	<i>leið</i>	<i>leið</i>	<i>veg</i>	<i>leið</i>
378:16.....	<i>Sviaveldi</i>	<i>Sviaveldi</i>	<i>Sviaríki</i>	<i>Sviaveldi</i>
378:20.....	<i>ský</i>	<i>ský</i>	<i>kú</i>	<i>ský</i>
378:23.....	<i>menn</i>	<i>menn</i>	<i>mjök</i>	<i>menn</i>
379:11.....	<i>munu</i>	<i>munu</i>	<i>munum</i>	<i>munu</i>
380:4.....	<i>Svanhvit</i>	<i>Svanhvit sys-</i> <i>tur sína</i>	<i>Svanhvit</i>	<i>Svanhvit</i>

A consideration of the above details shows at once that *e* shares in all cases the majority (3 vs. 1) reading except in the unimportant case on p. 366:20, where it stands with *b* against *a* and *c*—but *f* by Ásgeir Jónsson (cf. *infra*) agrees with it here, as do also the rímur—and 365:16–17, where it agrees with *a*, but *b* and *c* differ not only from it but also from each other. In none of these cases nor elsewhere can *e* be proven to show a copyist's error in comparison with the other MSS preserved. From the internal evidence of the text the conclusion is practically inevitable that *e* is the original, of which *a*, *b*, and *c* represent, directly or indirectly, copies, independent, to be sure, of each other. And there are not lacking other considerations, which tend to corroborate the evidence of the variants. In judging the MS begun by Ásgeir Jónsson (*a*) it must be borne in mind that he is in general not noted for the faithfulness of his copies and that in this particular case his work may be tested by comparison with his several other copies. For *d* is, as already remarked, from his hand, as is also another MS (*f*), Thott 1768 4to chart., in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. These 3 MSS (*a*, *d*, *f*) when compared point again to *e* as a common original, showing no direct relationship to *b* and *c*. Not only is that true, but *a* and *d* have even copied a supplementary remark found in *e*, wherein the writer states that his original was hardly legible and adds a note upon the topography of the saga, citing Magnús í Laufási Ólafsson as his authority. That *c* is a copy of *e* is pretty plain from the nature of

certain of its errors. In the case of 370:23-24, for example, one need only glance at the *Gvnlöb* of *e* to see how easily it might be taken for *Svylob*. Another case is even more striking: 378:20 *c* has *kú* for *ský* of the other MSS; the *sk* of *e* is in this case a ligature, the staff of the *k* being slightly curved to the right above to indicate the *s*. That *c* shows *Hadding* for *Halding* of the other MSS is no proof that it antedates them, for it has the same plural, *Haldingjar*. The direct dependence of *c* upon *e* is not so evident, but we have seen that the evidence of the text pointed unmistakably in this direction. It may be added that *b* has following the *Hrómundar saga* the *Bragða-Ólvis saga* as in *e*. *E* contains only these two sagas in the order mentioned. In the other MSS considered the *Bragða-Ólvis saga* is not present, and whatever may be the value of this saga (it has occurred to no one, so far as I know, to suppose it to be anything else than a paraphrase of the corresponding *rímur*), the few copies of it in existence evidently all go back to this same MS (AM 601b 4to). That MS *b* bears the statement that it was copied from a very old parchment (Copenhagen, 1687) need cause no misapprehension, for the statement appears to apply at most to the first four numbers of this large and varied collection,¹ or more likely only to the first (*Stjórnu-Odda draumr*). Exactly the same statement is attached to AM 555h 4to chart. written by Árni Magnússon the year before (1686), which contains only the *Stjórnu-Odda draumr*. About the actual possibility of all these MSS having been copied directly from *e* there is no means of judging so long as so little of the history of *e* is known. It might be stated that *f* also bears a date 1687 and was written apparently in Copenhagen. Even if it be necessary to assume in some cases lost intermediate copies, the general relationship would not thereby be materially affected. This relationship may be expressed simply thus:



our text being then *e*.

¹ Sc. Arwidsson, *Förteckning öfver kongl. bibliothekets i Stockholm isländska handskrifter*, 91; Gödel, *Katalog*, 196 f.

The establishment of *e* as the original of the MSS preserved is important because it disposes of the problem presented by the Danisms *soddan*, *strax*, etc., long since noted, in that they need not be carried farther back in the history of the text than the writing of *e*, i.e., than the last half of the seventeenth century. It is further important because it gives us a definite text to compare with the *rímur* for the purpose of ascertaining the mutual relationship of the two, and it puts us finally in a better position to judge of the worth of the supplementary statement appearing in this and two other copies (*a* and *d*) of the same saga. This statement in normalized modern Icelandic orthography reads as follows: "*Sú saga sem þetta var eftir skrifað, varð naumlega lesin, og ei sem skiljanlegust um landa eður staða heiti sum; þó er það víst að ráða hér af Kóng Ólafur muni verið hafa kóngur að nafnbót í Danmerkurveldi einhverstaðar þar, sem nær grensað hefur við Svíþjóð, því þá hefur Danmerkurriki haft marga smákónga, sem bevisast kann af fornum fræðum. Svo skrifar síra Magnús í Laufási Ólafsson, etc.*" This Árni Magnússon has branded with a "*mendacium est*" and he adds a reiteration of what he had already noted at the beginning: "*þetta er tekið úr rímunum*," i.e., he regarded the text as a paraphrase of the *rímur* (Griplur). Now the opinion of Árni Magnússon is entitled to respect, and Finnur Jónsson¹ still holds to this view of the relation of the saga to the *rímur*, though referring to Kölbing's *Beiträge*. But Kölbing contended that *rímur* and saga were independent of each other, both going back to an older saga version which he designated as *X*, which the *rímur* reproduced much more faithfully. Now this is not inconsistent with the statement about the illegibility of *e*'s original, which is furthermore designated "saga." Whether or not this view is correct remains to be tested by a renewed comparison of the saga with the *rímur*.

As concerns the supplement it is further to be noted that it is (*fide* Dr. Kålund) in the same hand in which the saga is written, a hand from the latter half of the seventeenth century, not that of Magnús Ólafsson (1573-1636), and that marginalia show it had been used by some one prior to its coming into Árni Magnússon's

¹ *Den isl. litt. hist. tilligemed den oldnorske* (1907), 334; cf. *Den oldnorske og oldisl. litt. hist.*, II (1901), 809.

possession. That it was written after an exceedingly poor original is apparent enough from the condition of its names alone, to say nothing of the rest of its contents. In this respect the statement of the supplement is credible enough and is in so far entitled to respect in spite of Árni Magnússon's annihilating comment. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that this MS (*e*) contains only one other saga, of which it appears also to be the original, and that this other saga is pretty certainly the paraphrase of the corresponding rímur. Can the "*saga*" in the supplement refer to the rímur (Griplur)? Or can we assume a paraphrase of earlier date, of which *e* is a poor copy? Against this supposition is only to be said that there is no other evidence of such and that mistakes of a mere copyist (apart from the names) cannot be demonstrated in *e*. Nor does the mention of Magnús Ólafsson help to clear the matter up; rather the contrary. He has, as Dr. Kálund assures me, not written the MS, was in fact dead long before it was written, and there is nothing to indicate that he had written an original, of which it may be the mere mechanical copy, as MS *a* is of it. The "*Svo skrifar*" can only mean, as Dr. Kálund states, that this supplement, or perhaps merely the statement about the numerous petty kings in Denmark, rests upon some writing of his. But his published writings show no trace of such a statement.¹ The supplement must then be discarded, unless it be confirmed by unmistakable internal evidence, as Árni Magnússon recognized.

2. *The Hrómundar saga and the Griplur*.—The rímur dealing with the story of Hrómundar Gripsson are commonly known as the Griplur, the title resting upon the authority of the rímur themselves (VI, 57, in Jónsson's edition). They have been ascribed, though upon very slight and questionable evidence, to a poet known to have lived at the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century, Sigurður blindi.² These rímur are preserved entire only in the MS AM 610c 4to chart. from the seventeenth century in the hand of Jón Gissursson (Kölbing's *a*).³ In addition to this there exist two fragments: AM 146a 8vo chart.

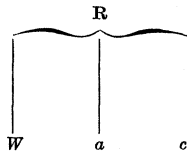
¹ For his works cf. Kálund's biographical sketch in Bricka, *Dansk biografisk Leksikon*, XII, 389 f.

² *Sc.* J. Dorkelsson, *Om Digtningen på Island i det 15. og 16. Århundrede*, 296 f.

³ Kölbing calls the MS (*Beitr.*, p. 159) incorrectly AM 110c.

from the first half of the seventeenth century written by Jón Finns-son (c of Kölbing),¹ containing part of the first (str. 1-36) and of the last (str. 37 to end) rímur, and finally a Wolfenbüttel parchment (Guelf. Aug. 42 4to perg.) dating apparently from the time about 1500² (Kollsbok), written probably by Jón kollr Oddsson (Kölbing's *B*, Jónsson's *W*), in which rímur I and II, 1-53, are lacking. The third fragment alluded to by Jón Þorkelsson,³ AM 603 4to perg., from the sixteenth century, seems unfortunately to have been lost.⁴

These three MSS are according to Kölbing⁵ independent of each other, the two former nearer related and pointing to a written original, the last evidently of oral descent from the same original (R), thus:



Finnur Jónsson⁶ appears to have accepted Kölbing's judgment upon this point and follows in his edition⁷ in the main *a*, correcting in places from the others and by conjecture where only corrupt readings are furnished by the MSS. Satisfactory evidence of the oral relationship existing between *W* and *a* is furnished among other things by the displacement of various strophes in the one as compared with the other.⁸ The following table will serve to indicate the relations of the three MSS to each other with reference to transposed or failing stanzas. The detail is taken from Jónsson's edition, the numbers of the stanzas being those of this text. The last column shows similar transpositions of the saga, so far as they can be demonstrated with certainty.

¹ He again misnames it (p. 160) AM 145a fol.

² *Sc. Antiq. Tidskr.* (1849-51), 8 ff.

³ *Op. cit.*, 297.

⁴ *Sc. Kålund, Katalog over den arnamagnæanske Håndskriftsamling*, II, 4.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, 182.

⁶ *Fernir fornislenskir rímnaftokkar Kaupmh.* (1896), III f.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, 17-42.

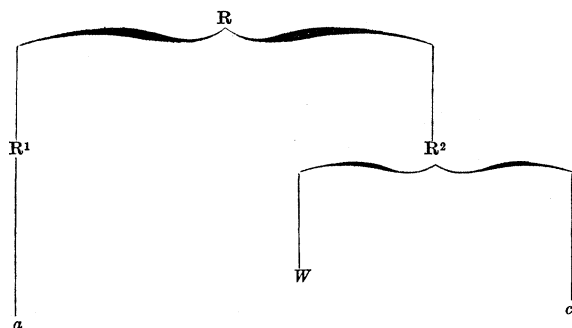
⁸ Cf. Jónsson, *op. cit.*, in apparat.

Rímur <i>a</i>	Rímur <i>c</i>	Rímur <i>W</i>	Saga <i>e</i>
I, 12.....	after I, 24	.....	.....
I, 33.....	I, 33	.....	after I, 36
After I, 36.....	I, 34	.....	.....
I, 41.....	before I, 37
II, 55.....	(lacking)	.....
after II, 56.....	II, 59	.....
(lacking).....	(III, beginning stanza)	.....
III, 3, 4.....	III, 3, 4	after III, 26
III, 8-10.....	after III, 2	.....
III, 11.....	(lacking)	.....
III, 12.....	after III, 7	.....
III, 15.....	before III, 14	.....
III, 17.....	after III, 19	.....
III, 19.....	after III, 22	.....
III, 21.....	after III, 52	.....
III, 24.....	after III, 28	.....
III, 26.....	after III, 24	.....
III, 27.....	after III, 29	.....
III, 28.....	after III, 21	.....
III, 29.....	after III, 26	.....
III, 30.....	after III, 27	.....
after III, 33.....	III, 31	.....
III, 32.....	after III, 36	.....
III, 35.....	after III, 25	.....
III, 36.....	after III, 31	.....
III, 37.....	after III, 34	.....
III, 43.....	after III, 39	.....
III, 45.....	(lacking)	.....
III, 46 Jónsson—
after III, 47
in MS.....	(lacking)	.....
III, 47.....	III, 47	after III, 50
III, 49.....	after III, 50	.....
III, 52.....	after III, 35	.....
IV, 9.....	after IV, 22	.....
IV, 11.....	after IV, 13	.....
IV, 13.....	after IV, 10	.....
IV, 14.....	after IV, 12	.....
IV, 16.....	after IV, 9	.....
IV, 22.....	after IV, 15	.....
IV, 31.....	(lacking)	.....
(lacking).....	V, 5	.....
V, 23, 24.....	V, 23, 24	before V, 5
(lacking).....	(V, 27 <i>a</i>)	.....
(lacking).....	(V, 35 <i>a</i>)	.....
V, 36.....	after V, 31	.....
V, 47.....	after V, 49	.....
VI, 11-13.....	VI, 11-13	after VI, 17
VI, 17.....	after VI, 21	after VI, 20
VI, 18.....	after VI, 19	.....
VI, 19.....	after VI, 16	.....
VI, 21.....	after VI, 18	after VI, 16
VI, 22, 23.....	VI, 22, 23	after VI, 9
VI, 24.....	VI, 24	after VI, 21
after VI, 14.....	VI, 28	.....
(lacking).....	(VI, 44 <i>a</i>)	(VI, 44 <i>a</i>)	.....
after VI, 56.....	VI, 55	VI, 55	.....

Now besides these differences in the order of the stanzas there are very considerable variations in the readings, as may be seen by consulting Jónsson's critical apparatus. Whatever may be said of these variants, the matter of the order of the stanzas can hardly be laid to the charge of careless copyists, but is, as Kölbing states, evidence sufficient of at least two different records of the orally transmitted *rímur*. This matter of oral transmission is one which must be especially taken into consideration for the *rímur*, as indeed it must generally for the older Icelandic literature, and the disposition of the stanzas in these different records of the *Griplur* is instructive for those who object for example to the "editing" of the Eddic poems. That such poems can remain through oral transmission for a long time intact and with surprisingly little change on the whole, is sufficiently demonstrated by the popular ballads of the Faroe Islands, whose case is in many ways analogous to that of the Icelandic *rímur*.¹ But Kölbing is again guilty of a misstatement in asserting that *c* is more closely related to *a*. By consulting the above table one will note that the fragment of *ríma* I in *c* shows two deviations from *a* in the order of stanzas, while the other fragment from the close shows likewise two deviations, exactly agreeing, however, with *W*. As this is the only portion which can be compared with *W* the agreement is complete so far as comparison can be made. If the variant readings in this portion be compared, it will be noted further that *c* in the great majority of cases corresponds exactly with or is at least nearer *W*. The inference that *c* is a copy of *W* or at least a lineal descendant of it through now lost connecting links would be natural enough, nor is there much in the variants to contradict such an assumption. When in VI, 38.3 Jónsson puts *renn* from this MS in the text in preference to the reading *enn* of the other two, his choice is at least open to question. More serious is VI, 44.3 where *W* has *hondum* (i.e., *höndum*) for *honum* of the other two (but this so slight mistake of *W* might have been corrected independently by *c* or an intermediate copy), VI, 46.4 where Jónsson gives the preference to *c*'s *gramnum* over *a*'s *granum* and *W*'s *jarnum*, and in the *mansóngr* VI, 57.2 where all three MSS show widely varying readings and *W* lacks the end-rhyme and is in so far inferior to *c*. If these few considerations be sufficient proof that *c* is not descended

¹ *Sc.*, e.g., my *Hálfssaga ok Hálfssrekka* (1909), 56 ff.

in a direct line from *W*, they in no wise affect our conclusion that these two MSS are very closely related indeed and are at most to be referred back to a common original which was widely different from *a*. The relationship of these three MSS would then be expressed thus:



where R^1 and R^2 represent different records of the orally transmitted *rímur*, R^1 much the better and presumably then the earlier.

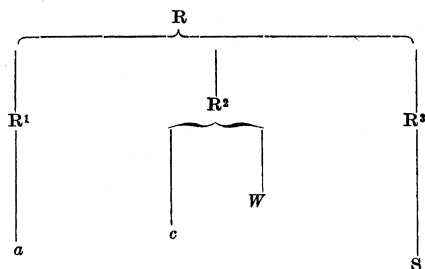
In the light of these facts the saga must be considered and I can here refer to the close comparisons of saga and *rímur* which Kölbing offers,¹ to which I shall have comparatively little to add. It may be said at the outset that the presumption is entirely against the saga as showing the original, and in fact Kölbing shows at all points that the *rímur* have the better version. Only the very obvious conclusion that the saga is a wretched paraphrase of the *rímur*, as Árni Magnússon had suspected, he seems to have been unwilling to draw. The very principle upon which Kölbing works² is in itself open to criticism, at least if taken too literally. While it is true that the *rímur* have a general tendency to borrow their material from older sagas and to convert it into metrical form without substantial changes, the idea is to be guarded against that the relationship between metrical version and prose original is essentially other than in the mediaeval literature generally. As a matter of fact the *rímur* show various stages of adaptation up to the entirely original *Skiðaríma*, which is in its treatment of older material wholly independent of any prose version. The problem of the source of the *rímur* and their composition and style is in each particular case an individual one, as it is in literature generally. The *ríma* is by no

¹ *Op. cit.*, 161 ff.

² *Op. cit.*, 139.

means, cannot from the nature of the case be, a purely mechanical production, like the copy of a MS, and Kölbing's statement that the *ríma* often follows its prose original word for word needs testing before being used as a working principle. As a matter of fact, it is particularly hard to see how a production of so complicated a structure as the Icelandic *ríma* with its essentially exact metrical construction, its end-rhyme (in many cases it also shows assonance [*hending*] within the line itself after the manner of the Scaldic poetry), its alliteration, its kennings, and its poetic *heiti* could by any possibility follow word for word a prose original. If there be any very close word-for-word correspondence the a priori probability would favor the contrary relationship, viz., that the prose version is a paraphrase of the metrical. But each case, as has just been said, must be considered individually in the light of all the facts bearing upon it. The points which Kölbing makes for the inferiority of the *Hrómundar saga* are in addition to the corrupt condition of its names the fact that it has no *vísur*, whose presence in their original the *rímur* plainly bear witness to (162 ff.), that it omits much which is essential to the sense and which cannot be a new creation of the *rímur* (164 ff.), and that it transposes often greater or less portions in a manner not in accordance with the general sense of the whole, whereas the *rímur* (*a*) in such places generally give the order to be expected (167 ff.). This last weakness of the *saga* is especially noticeable in the interpretations of the dreams in VI. Now the first three considerations may in case of necessity be laid to the charge of the nearly illegible MS which the *saga* mentions as its original. The introduction of Danisms might be explained in the same way. But the transposition of portions of the text cannot be explained in this way, whereas we have already seen in the case of *W* how easily stanzas of the orally transmitted *rímur* may fall into other than their proper places, a fact familiar to the students of popular ballads and other poetry taken down from popular oral sources. This is then another factor strongly indicating the origin of the *Hrómundar saga* as an abstract of a poor copy of the *Griplur*. It may be added that Kölbing finds nothing in the *saga* which forms in any way an addition to the *rímur* or points to its having at any point an older reading. It remains to note, so far as may be, whether these transpositions correspond to those noted in the case of *W* (and so far as

preserved, of *c*) or whether they indicate still a third record of the orally transmitted rímur. As the saga is so brief and omits so much, it is not at all points easy to determine exactly the order of stanzas upon which it rests, but in many cases the facts are so clear as to admit of no doubt. Such certain cases are noted in the fourth column of the table given above, from which it may readily be observed that the saga does not correspond exactly either with the *a* or the *Wc* version, although showing plainly enough the transposition of stanzas in its original. So far as can be observed, it appears to lie a bit nearer the latter version, and various readings tend to confirm this evidence of the order of the stanzas, e.g., I, 25 *S* and *c austr*, *a norðr*; I, 26 *S* and *c eyland*, *a annes*; V, 17 *S* and *W fjórtán*, *a fimtán*. It is entirely conceivable that the saga may have originated directly or indirectly from the lost MS of the Griplur in AM 603 4to memb., and this is all the more likely as this is the only one of the MSS of the Griplur known to have contained both these rímur and the Bragða-Ölvis rímur (*Ölvis rímur ens sterka*), the source of the only other saga associated with the Hrómundar saga in its original MS. It seems unnecessary to bring forward further proof of the fact that the Hrómundar saga is valueless, or at the most of very slight value toward establishing a critical text of the rímur; the space already used for this proof is perhaps all too great in view of Professor Jónsson's renewed insistence upon the fact. But Kölbing's contentions had never been met, and so long as that was the case, a definite and satisfactory conclusion was impossible. In the light of that fact a careful revision of the whole matter may be justified, especially as it forms the necessary introduction to any critical study of the legendary content of these productions. The relationship of the texts preserved would then be expressed thus:



where S represents the original MS (*e*) of the saga. Now if *W* dates from about 1500, as supposed, and its original, R², shows already the order of the stanzas very poorly preserved, i.e., if it is an apparently later record than R¹, which itself shows some such transpositions, then the original composition of R must go pretty well back into the fifteenth century, which makes it improbable that it was the work of the poet Sigurður blindi (born 1450–60 according to Jón Þorkelsson).¹ The statement that it was rests upon so little authority² that it has no weight against this internal evidence and we may accordingly neglect it altogether, as does F. Jónsson.³

3. *The Hrómundar kvæði*.—MS AM 723b 4to chart.⁴ includes (III) a collection of three poems, bearing the cover-label "*Gömul kvæði*." The MS dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century and is in the hand of Árni Magnússon. The separate titles of the three kvæði are: (1) "*Qvæði af Sturlaugi Starfsama*," (2) "*Qvæði af Rollant Riddara*," (3) "*Qvæði af Hromundi Grips syne*." The last in the orthography adopted by Jónsson for the rímur reads as follows:

Kvæði af Hrómundi Gripssyni

1. Hér skal renna ræðan Týrs úr róma sal
um Gripsson þann, sem gjörði stríð með brandi,
garpinn horska heiðra skal.
2. Hrómund nefna höldar þann, sem hreysti er léð,
í syðri Svíþjóð seima Týr að bygði
ríkur og mildur ranni réð.
3. Öllum var sá ættum stærður örva grér,
margan sigur milding vann hinn snjalli,
sá fékk ærið orma sker.

¹ *Om Digtningen på Island i det 15. og 16. Århundrede*, 278.

² Sc. Hálfdan Einarsson, *Sciagraphia historiae literariae islandicae*, Havniae 1777 (2d ed. as *Hist. lit. isl., Havniae et Lipsiae 1786*), 87; cf. J. Þorkelsson, *op. cit.*, 296.

³ In a second edition of the *Griplur* (*Rímnasafu*, 351 ff., 1909–10) Finnur Jónsson calls attention to another MS containing these rímur, a new accession of the Arnarnagmæan collection, Accessoria 22 (=d). In the order of its strophes it is independent of the other MSS and evidently goes back to still a fourth record of the orally transmitted rímur (R⁴).

⁴ Sc. Kålund, *Katalog*, II, 152 f.

4. Ólaf nefna ýtar þann með Ægis dýr,
Kóngurinn hélt á kólgustríðan viðir,
Hrómund fylgdi hjörva Týr.
5. Kári og Örnólf karskir voru kóngi með,
Viking Hröngvið virðar fundu að kvöldi;
við Íra láðir er það skeð.
6. Fullhugarnir fóru á móts við fylkir þann,
frægir bræður fjörinu sínu t'ndu;
sá má hrósa sigri, er vann.
7. Hrómund frækni hefur sig upp á Hröngviðs skeið,
Kylfu stóra kappinn hafði í hendi,
í höfuð á berserk hratt hún reið.
8. Sá hét Helgi, er hefna vildi hlýra sinn;
Hrómund græddi hann harðla ófyrirsynju,
hans munu bræður bíða af þín.
9. Í víking lagðist vella Týr með vaskan her,
suður í Valland seggir komu að hausti;
í Þráins haug að þegninn fer.
10. Mistiltein hið mæta sverð að milding fékk,
af nöðru bóli nógan auðinn hafði,
með drengskap sínum deyddi hann rekk.
11. Hann valdi gull en verndar burt, sem vel má tjá,
einginn mátti hans auranægðir telja;
gékk hans frægð um grund og sjá.
12. Kóingsins systir klén og ung skal koma við óð,
seggir nefna Svanhvít hringa Hildi,
sú var bæði björt og rjóð.
13. Til Hrómunds feldi hún elsku eim og ástar hug,
beggja hjörtun blfðkast þann veg leingi,
einhver mun því aka á bug.
14. Bildur og Vóli báðir þjóna buðlung þeir,
Hrómund rægðu hratt við kónginn dýra,
þess mun gjalda þorna Freyr.
15. Burt úr ríki buðlung varð fyrir bænastað,
kóngi gjörðist stórlega stríð til handa,
höldar reyndu hjalta nað.

16. Svanhvít biður þá Hrómund fylgja hjörva Týr,
skjaldarbönd gaf slikju hrundin fróma,
hann hart á móti Helga snýr.
17. Halding kóngur Helga fylgdi í hrævar tafn,
hann var manna mestur á svenskri grundu,
honum fannst ei nema Hrómund jafn.
18. Sá hét Blindur, er buðlung fylgdi brigðuteitt,
vissi hann alt, hvað varð í þessu landi,
aldri kom honum óvart neitt.
19. Þá réð hefjast Hildar hregg með hölda þjóð,
átta bræður öðlings gjörðu að falla,
Hrómund bar í hjarta móð.
20. Gripsson allvel gékk í stríð, sem greinir frá,
skjaldarbönd hann skjótlega af sér lagði,
við Helga gjörði hart að rjá.
21. Gabbi trúði Gripsson því sem gjörði fljóð;
Helgi hinn frækni hopaði hvergi úr tafni,
víst á Hrómund vakti blóð.
22. Helga öðling hitti skjótt með heiptarsnið,
óvígur varð örva þundurinn frómi;
Hadding flýr með hálfitt sitt lið.
23. Sverðið misti sæmdarmaður við sára fund;
Vóli lét í Væfir brandinn sökka,
aptur fékk á örlögs stund.
24. Hagall græddi hægt með listum hreystimann;
Blindur leitar bæði um land og eyjar,
gaurinn hvergi Gripsson fann.
25. Blind og Hadding dreyma gjörðu drjúgt til hans,
Hrómund bjóst þó hefndir þeim að vinna,
þeir fréttu ei fyrr til frægðarmanns.
26. Hrómundur feldi Hadding þá með hreystigrein,
óvinum sínum eyddi burt úr landi,
mætan hafði hann Mistiltein.
27. Kónsins systur kappinn fékk með kurt og dáð,
seima lundurinn settist einn að ríki,
seggurinn varði Svenska láð.

28. Örva gautur allvel unni auðar Ná,
syni og dætur sín á millum gátu,
þar mun synt að segja frá.
29. Kveð eg ei leingur þennan þátt, því þrýtur óð;
Berlings ferjan brotni Hárs við minni,
byrgist aptur Boðnar slóð.

That this poem goes back to a source prior to the *rímur* is unlikely enough, nor need Árni Magnússon's label be interpreted as indicating such a conclusion on his part. That he considered it on the other hand as of greater literary worth than the *Hrómundar saga Greipssonar* is evident from the label and the glosses upon the respective MSS. And a comparison shows readily that the *kvæði* is not based upon the preserved saga. Take for example the names: the oft-recurring *Gripsson* stands out at once in contrast to the *Greipsson* of the saga. Notice further *Hadding* (stanzas 22, 25, 26) though 17, it must be confessed, shows the *Halding* of the saga. As a matter of fact the *kvæði* is not at all points in agreement with the *rímur*. Stanza 2 places Hrómund's home in southern Sweden, the *rímur* apparently regard him as living in the kingdom of Ólafur, viz., Hordaland in Norway.¹ The conflict with the viking Hröngvið took place according to the *kvæði* (st. 5) on the coast of Ireland; but the *rímur* (I, 25) make this contest take place at the Elfarsker (the islands at the mouth of the Götaelf below the present city of Göteborg), and the saga has corrupted the same name to Úlfasker (Fas. II, 365). The *kvæði* brings in Blindur entirely prematurely (st. 18), as he has nothing to do with the fight. In the *rímur* he does not appear until the time of Hrómund's convalescence at the house of Hagall (V, 35a, 36). Otherwise the correspondence is close enough, the *kvæði* giving merely a very condensed catalogue of events, adding nothing to the account in the *rímur* and of course omitting unimportant details. Even the important part played by Kára in the contest and her tragic death is lacking.

This poem is in all probability a work of the period of revival of Icelandic interest in the older literature, i.e., of the seventeenth

¹ The saga has corrupted *Hörðum* to *Görðum*, which should mean Garðaríki (Russia). Raft's Denmark is taken from MS *a* of the saga, which had taken it into the text from the supplementary conjecture of its original, *e*.

century, is based upon the account of the rímur, but seemingly from memory of this account, or, like the saga, from a bad copy of the same. In the opinion of Árni Magnússon it was apparently older than the saga, but as the two are mutually independent of each other, there is no means of proving the fact. As the only MS is in the hand of Árni Magnússon, it is possible enough that he wrote it down from memory, but it would seem that he did not know the author, nor is there much prospect of demonstrating who it may have been. The *Hrómundar kvæði* contributes little of value to our investigation of the literary material of the *Griplur*, but as a specimen of the treatment accorded by Icelanders of the seventeenth century to old themes from the heroic legend, it is, I trust, not unworthy of publication.

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